

Northern Great Plains Network

Inventory and Monitoring Monthly Report

July 2002

Herp Inventory: The scheduled herp inventories are completed for this field season, except for one more visit to MORU (Dr. Smith is now in Antigua where he has an ongoing study). Although the drought greatly compromised the number of specimens found, we still learned a lot in terms of species and methods.

Bird Inventory: The bird inventories are completed for this field season. The bird inventories were quite successful.

Mammal Inventory: The mammal inventories started in the mid-July at DETO. Due to the diversity of habitats at the park, the work took longer than anticipated. I have discussed the methods with Dr. Schmidt. In spite of the difficulties at DETO we will continue using the protocol in the Network Study Plan in anticipation that other parks will be less time consuming. Dr. Schmidt has recently sent out a revised schedule (contact me if you haven't received a copy). The mammal inventories are very labor intensive to set up so if park staff is available to help the first day the mammal crew is at the park (e.g., carrying traps, creating pitfalls) it is greatly appreciated.

NPSpecies: I and/or Jon Dalgleish have visited with WICA, AGFO, FOLA, and THRO to discuss the current status of NPSpecies data entry in regard to those parks. The meetings have been very constructive (and long overdue). Jon and I are focusing on completing data entry and quality control for those 4 parks. I expect to move on to other parks, including site visits, once I have hired a technician to replace Jon.

Monitoring: On July 19 I, along with Phyllis Adams of the MWRO and Lisa Thomas of the LTEM program, met with staff of AGFO to discuss monitoring. I found this 3-hour workshop very constructive in regards to 1) informing park staff of what the I&M Program is all about, and 2) discussing park resources, issues, stressors, and potential indicators. These workshops are a precursor to our larger Network-wide monitoring workshops we will have over the next year or so. I believe this incremental approach is the best way to develop a monitoring program. Unfortunately, it is beginning to look less likely that our Network will get the \$150k in monitoring startup money (i.e., base money) that we were expecting in FY03.

I&M Equipment: The I&M Program has (and will continue to) acquire equipment and supplies necessary to run a state-of-the-art science program. However, I view this equipment as ultimately belonging to all 13 parks in the Network. With that in mind I encourage parks to contact me if they would like to use any of the following equipment or resources (of course I&M uses receive highest priority for these items).

- 3 Kodak DX3900 digital cameras with docking stations and 128mb memory cards
- 4 Garmin eTrek GPS units

- Complete sets of Journal of Wildlife Management, Wildlife Society Bulletin, Journal of Mammalogy, and Passenger Pigeon
- Kodak 35mm slide and negative scanner
- Kodak i50 document scanner (the type you can feed multiple pages through)
- Mitsubishi multimedia projector (a.k.a., a Powerpoint projector)
- 8 automated motion-sensing cameras for detecting wildlife (1 digital, 7 film)
- Dell Pentium II desktop PC and monitor

Specimen Collectins: Remember to collect any incidental (e.g., roadkill) vertebrate specimens you come across, assuming of course they are in good shape. The recommended protocol is to place them in a plastic bag and then put in a freezer, with documentation on collector, date, location, etc.. Photo documentation is also very helpful in documenting species presence in parks. Kudos to Bill Supernaugh who recently captured a Great Plains leopard frog outside his residence; this is a new record for the park and a couple hundred miles west and north of most range maps.

Observation Cards: Jon has produced 3x5" observation cards that are consistent with the fields in NPSpecies and suitable for all parks. If you would like a stack of these cards please let me or Jon know.

SYNTHESIS: Will Powers has been working hard on installing SYNTHESIS at WICA. He has come across several bugs with the program, most of which relate to using the software in a Network environment.

I&M Office Location: It's my understanding that the proposed U.S. Forest Service building is moving forward, albeit slower than most would like. In the interim I have decided --- with concurrence from the Network Steering Committee --- to move the I&M Program (i.e., me and a technician) to MORU, effective October 1, of this year. Specifically, the park has space in the upper level of the "Sculpter's Studio". This location provides several benefits, perhaps the most significant of which is I can now advertise for a technician within the commuting area of where the program will be permanently located. I am very gracious for the hospitality, assistance, and experiences provided me by Bill Supernaugh and BADL staff.